

Article 3.

Fund-Raising Consultants, Solicitors, and Coventurers.

§ 131F-15. License required for fund-raising consultant.

(a) License Required. – Unless exempted under G.S. 131F-3, a person shall not act as a fund-raising consultant in this State unless that person has obtained a license from the Department.

(b) License Application. – Applications for a license or renewal of a license shall be submitted on a form provided by the Department, shall be signed under oath, and shall include the following:

- (1) The street address and telephone number of the principal place of business of the applicant and any street addresses of business locations in this State if the principal place of business is located outside this State.
- (2) The form of the applicant's business.
- (3) The names and residence addresses of all officers, directors, and owners.
- (4) Whether any of the owners, directors, officers, or employees of the applicant are related as parent, child, spouse, or sibling to any of the following individuals:
 - a. Other directors, officers, owners, or employees of the applicant.
 - b. Any officer, director, trustee, or employee of any charitable organization or sponsor under contract to the applicant.
 - c. Any supplier or vendor providing goods or services to any charitable organization or sponsor under contract to the applicant.
- (5) Whether the applicant or any of the applicant's officers, directors, employees, or owners have, within the last five years, been convicted of any felony, or of any misdemeanor arising from the conduct of a solicitation for a charitable organization or sponsor or charitable or sponsor purpose, or been enjoined from violating a charitable solicitation law in this or any other state.

(c) Fees. – The application for an initial or renewal license shall be accompanied by a license fee of two hundred dollars (\$200.00). A fund-raising consultant that is a partnership or corporation may obtain a license for and pay a single fee on behalf of all of its partners, members, officers, directors, agents, and employees. In that case, the names and street addresses of all of the officers, employees, and agents of the fund-raising consultant and all other persons with whom the fund-raising consultant has contracted to work under its direction shall be listed in the license application. Each license is valid for one year or a part of one year and expires on March 31 of each year. The license may be renewed on or before March 31 of each year for additional one-year periods upon application to the Department and payment of the license fee.

(d) Contracts. – Every contract or agreement between a fund/y-raising consultant and a charitable organization or sponsor shall be in writing, signed by two authorized officials of the charitable organization or sponsor, and filed by the fund-raising consultant with the Department at least five days prior to the performance of any service by the fund-raising consultant. Solicitation under the contract or agreement shall not begin before the filing of the contract or agreement. The contract shall contain all of the following provisions:

- (1) A statement of the charitable purpose or sponsor purpose for which the solicitation campaign is being conducted.
- (2) A statement of the respective obligations of the fund-raising consultant and the charitable organization or sponsor.
- (3) A clear statement of the fee that will be paid to the fund-raising consultant.

- (4) The effective and termination dates.
- (5) A statement that the fund-raising consultant shall not, at any time, have control or custody of contributions.

(e) Departmental Review. – The Department shall examine each application or renewal filed by a fund-raising consultant and determine whether the requirements are satisfied. If the Department determines that the requirements are not satisfied, the Department shall notify the fund-raising consultant within 10 days after its receipt of the application or renewal. If the Department does not respond within 10 days, the license is deemed approved. Within seven days after receipt of a notification that the license requirements are not satisfied, the applicant may file a petition for a contested case. The State has the burden of proof in the contested case. The contested case hearing must be held within seven days after the petition is filed. A final decision must be made within five days of the hearing. The contested case hearing proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, except that the time limits and provisions set forth in this section shall prevail to the extent of any conflict. The applicant shall be permitted to continue to operate or continue operations pending judicial review of the Department's denial of the application. The Department shall make rules regarding the custody and control of any funds collected during the review period and disposal of such funds in the event the denial of the application is affirmed on appeal.

(f) Fund. – All license fees shall be paid to the Department and deposited into the Solicitation of Contributions Fund to be used to pay the costs incurred in administering and enforcing this Chapter.

(g) Change in Information. – Unless otherwise provided, any material change in information filed with the Department pursuant to this section shall be reported in writing to the Department within seven working days after the change occurred. (1981, c. 886, s. 1; 1985, c. 497, s. 1; 1989, c. 566, s. 2; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 759, s. 2; 2011-398, s. 48.)

§ 131F-16. License required for solicitors.

(a) Licensure Required. – Unless exempted under G.S. 131F-3, a person shall not act as a solicitor in this State unless that person has obtained a license from the Department and paid the applicable fees.

(b) Applications. – Applications for a license or renewal of a license shall be submitted on a form provided by the Department, shall be signed under oath, and shall include the following information:

- (1) The street address and telephone number of the principal place of business of the applicant and any North Carolina street addresses if the principal place of business is located outside this State.
- (2) The form of the applicant's business.
- (3) The place and date when the applicant, if other than an individual, was legally established.
- (4) The names and residence addresses of all officers, directors, and owners.
- (5) A statement as to whether any of the owners, directors, officers, or employees of the applicant are related as parent, spouse, child, or sibling to:
 - a. Any other directors, officers, owners, or employees of the applicant.
 - b. Any officer, director, trustee, or employee of any charitable organization or sponsor under contract to the applicant.

c. Any supplier or vendor providing goods or services to any charitable organization or sponsor under contract to the applicant.

(6) A statement as to whether the applicant or any of the directors, officers, persons with a controlling interest in the applicant, or employees or agents involved in solicitation have been convicted, within the last five years, of any felony, or of a misdemeanor arising from the conduct of a solicitation for any charitable organization or sponsor or charitable or sponsor purpose, or been enjoined from violating a charitable solicitation law in this or any other state.

(7) The names of all persons in charge of any solicitation activity.

(c) Fees. – The application for an initial or renewal license shall be accompanied by a fee of two hundred dollars (\$200.00). A solicitor that is a partnership or corporation may register for and pay a single fee on behalf of all of the partners, members, officers, directors, agents, and employees. In that case, the names and street addresses of all the officers, employees, and agents of the solicitor and all other persons with whom the solicitor has contracted to work under that solicitor's direction, including solicitors, shall be listed in the license application or furnished to the Department within five days after the date of employment or contractual arrangement. Each license is valid for one year or a part of one year and expires on March 31 of each year. The license may be renewed on or before March 31 of each year for an additional one-year period upon application to the Department and payment of the license fee.

(d) Bond. – A solicitor shall, at the time of application or renewal of the license, file with and have approved by the Department a bond with a surety authorized to do business in this State and to which the solicitor is the principal obligor. The amount of the bond shall be determined as follows:

- (1) Twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), if the contributions received for the last fiscal year were less than one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000).
- (2) Thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000), if the contributions received for the last fiscal year were at least one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) but less than two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000).
- (3) Fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000), if the contributions received for the last fiscal year were at least two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000).

The solicitor shall maintain the bond in effect as long as the license is in effect. The liability of the surety under the bond shall not exceed an all-time aggregate liability of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). The bond, which may be in the form of a rider to a larger blanket liability bond, shall be payable to the State and to any person who may have a cause of action against the principal obligor of the bond for any liability arising out of a violation by the obligor of any provision of this Chapter or any rule adopted under this Chapter.

(d1) In lieu of the bond required under subsection (d) of this section, a solicitor may submit a certificate of deposit in the amount as for a bond pursuant to subsection (d) of this section. The certificate of deposit shall be payable to the State and unrestrictively endorsed to the Department; or, in the case of a negotiable certificate of deposit, unrestrictively endorsed to the Department; or, in the case of a nonnegotiable certificate of deposit, assigned to the Department in a form satisfactory to the Department. Access to the certificate of deposit in favor of the State is subject to the same conditions as for a bond under subsection (d) of this section and shall extend for a period not less than four years after the solicitor ceases activities that are subject to this Chapter. The Department shall deliver to the State Treasurer certificates of deposit submitted under this section.

(e) Departmental Review. – The Department shall examine each application filed by a solicitor. If the Department determines that the requirements are not satisfied, the Department shall notify the solicitor within 10 days after its receipt of the application. If the Department does not respond within 10 days, the license is deemed approved. Within seven days after receipt of a notification that the requirements are not satisfied, the applicant may request a hearing. The state shall bear the burden of proof at such hearing. The hearing shall be held within seven days after receipt of the request. Any recommended order, if one is issued, shall be rendered within three days after the hearing. The final order shall then be issued within two days after the recommended order. If there is no recommended order, the final order shall be issued within five days after the hearing. The proceedings shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 150B of the General Statutes, except that the time limits and provision set forth in this subsection prevail to the extent of any conflict. The applicant shall be permitted to continue to operate or continue operations pending judicial review of the Department's denial of the application. The Department shall make rules regarding the custody and control of any funds collected during the review period and disposal of such funds in the event the denial of the application is affirmed on appeal.

(f) Solicitation Notice. – No less than five days before commencing any solicitation campaign or event, the solicitor shall file with the Department a solicitation notice on a form provided by the Department. The notice shall be signed and sworn to by the contracting officer of the solicitor and shall include:

- (1) A description of the solicitation event or campaign.
- (2) Each location and telephone number from which the solicitation is to be conducted.
- (3) The legal name and residence address of each person responsible for directing and supervising the conduct of the campaign.
- (4) A statement as to whether the solicitor will, at any time, have custody of contributions.
- (5) The account number and location of each bank account where receipts from the campaign are to be deposited.
- (6) A full and fair description of the charitable or sponsor program for which the solicitation campaign is being carried out as provided in the contract between the solicitor and the charitable organization or sponsor.
- (7) The fund-raising methods to be used.
- (8) A copy of the contract executed in accordance with subsection (g) of this section.

(g) Contracts. – Each contract or agreement between a solicitor and a charitable organization or sponsor for each solicitation campaign shall be in writing, shall be signed by two authorized officials of the charitable organization or sponsor, one of whom shall be a member of the organization's governing body and one of whom shall be the authorized contracting officer for the solicitor. Each contract or agreement shall contain all of the following provisions:

- (1) A statement of the charitable or sponsor purpose and program for which the solicitation campaign is being conducted.
- (2) A statement of the respective obligations of the solicitor and the charitable organization or sponsor.
- (3) A statement of the guaranteed minimum percentage of the gross receipts from contributions which will be remitted to the charitable organization or sponsor. If the solicitation involves the sale of goods, services, or tickets to a fund-raising

event, the percentage of the purchase price which will be remitted to the charitable organization or sponsor. Any stated percentage shall exclude any amount which the charitable organization or sponsor shall pay as fund-raising costs.

- (4) A statement of the percentage of the gross revenue for which the solicitor shall be compensated. If the compensation of the professional solicitor is not contingent upon the number of contributions or the amount of revenue received, the compensation shall be expressed as a reasonable estimate of the percentage of the gross revenue, and the contract shall clearly disclose the assumptions upon which the estimate is based. The stated assumptions shall be based upon all of the relevant facts known to the solicitor regarding the solicitation to be conducted by the solicitor.

- (5) The effective and termination dates of the contract.

(h) Financial Report. – Within 90 days after a solicitation campaign has been completed and on the anniversary of the commencement of a solicitation campaign lasting more than one year, the solicitor shall provide to the charitable organization or sponsor and file with the Department a financial report of the campaign, including the gross revenue received, an itemization of all expenses incurred, and the fixed percentage of the gross revenue that the charitable organization or sponsor received as a benefit from the solicitation campaign. The report shall be completed on a form provided by the Department and shall be signed by an authorized official of the solicitor who shall certify under oath that the report is true and correct.

(i) Handling of Contributions. – Each contribution collected by or in the custody of the solicitor shall be solely in the name of the charitable organization or sponsor on whose behalf the contribution was solicited. Not later than two days after receipt of each contribution, the solicitor shall deposit the entire amount of the contribution in an account at a bank or other federally insured financial institution, which account shall be in the name of that charitable organization or sponsor. The charitable organization or sponsor shall have sole control of all withdrawals from the account and the solicitor shall not be given the authority to withdraw any deposited funds from the account.

(j) Records of Solicitors. – During each solicitation campaign, and for not less than three years after its completion, the solicitor shall maintain the following records:

- (1) The date and amount of each contribution received and the name, address, and telephone number of each contributor.
- (2) The name and residence street address of each employee, agent, and any other person, however designated, who is involved in the solicitation, the amount of compensation paid to each, and the dates on which the payments were made.
- (3) A record of all contributions that at any time are in the custody of the solicitor.
- (4) A record of all expenses incurred by the solicitor for the payment of which the solicitor is liable.
- (5) A record of all expenses incurred by the solicitor for the payment of which the charitable organization or sponsor is liable.
- (6) The location of each bank or financial institution in which the solicitor has deposited revenue from the solicitation campaign and the account number of each account in which the deposits were made.
- (7) A copy of each pitch sheet or solicitation script used during the completed solicitation campaign.

- (8) If a refund of a contribution has been requested, the name and address of each person requesting the refund. If a refund was made, the amount and the date it was made.
- (k) Records of Tickets. – If the solicitor sells tickets to any event and represents that the tickets will be donated for use by another person, the solicitor shall maintain for at least three years the following records:
 - (1) The name and address of each contributor who purchases or donates tickets and the number of tickets purchased or donated by the contributor.
 - (2) The name and address of each organization that receives the donated tickets for the use of others, and the number of tickets received by the organization.
- (l) Review of Records. – Any of the records described in this section shall be made available to the Department upon request and shall be furnished within 10 days after the request.
- (m) Change in Information. – Unless otherwise provided in this Chapter, any change in any information filed with the Department under this section shall be reported in writing to the Department within seven days after the change occurs.
- (n) License Rescinded. – Any person licensed as a solicitor shall permanently lose that person's license if it is determined that that person, any officer or director thereof, any person with a ten percent (10%) or greater interest therein, or any person the solicitor employs, engages, or procures to solicit for compensation, has been convicted in the last five years of a crime arising from the conduct of a solicitation for a charitable organization or sponsor or a charitable purpose or sponsor purpose. (1981, c. 886, s. 1; 1985, c. 497, s. 1; 1989, c. 566, s. 2; 1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 759, s. 2; 1997-124, s. 1; 2003-373, s. 2.)

§ 131F-17. Disclosure requirements of solicitors.

- (a) General Disclosures. – A solicitor shall comply with the following disclosures:
 - (1) Prior to orally requesting a contribution or along with a written request for a contribution, a solicitor shall clearly disclose:
 - a. The name of the solicitor as on file with the Department.
 - b. If the individual acting on behalf of the solicitor identifies himself by name, the individual's legal name.
 - c. That the caller is a paid solicitor.
 - (2) In the case of a solicitation campaign conducted orally, whether by telephone or otherwise, any written confirmation, receipt, or reminder sent to any person who has contributed or has pledged to contribute, shall include a clear disclosure of the information required under subdivision (1) of this subsection.
 - (3) In addition to the information required by subdivision (1) of this subsection, any written confirmation, receipt, or reminder of contribution made pursuant to an oral solicitation and any written solicitation shall conspicuously state in type of a minimum of nine points:

"Financial information about the solicitor and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at [telephone number]. The license is not an endorsement by the State."

The statement shall be made conspicuous by use of one or more of the following: underlining, a border, or bold type. When the solicitation materials consist of more than one piece, the statement shall be displayed prominently in the solicitation materials, but not necessarily on every page.

- (4) If requested by the person being solicited, the solicitor shall inform that person, in writing, within 14 days of the request, of the fixed percentage of the gross revenue or the reasonable estimate of the percentage of the gross revenue that the charitable organization or sponsor will receive as a benefit from the solicitation campaign.
 - (5) If requested by the person being solicited, the solicitor shall inform that person, in writing, within 14 days of the request, of the percentage of the contribution which may be deducted as a charitable contribution under federal income tax laws.
- (b) Tickets. – A solicitor shall not represent that tickets to any event will be donated for use by another person, unless:
- (1) The solicitor has the written commitments from persons stating that they will accept donated tickets and specifying the number of tickets they are willing to accept.
 - (2) The written commitments are filed with the Department prior to any solicitation.

The contributions solicited for donated tickets shall not be more than the amount representing the number of ticket commitments received from persons and filed with the Department. At least seven days before the date of the event, the solicitor shall give all donated tickets to each person that made the written commitment to accept them. (1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 759, s. 2; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 748, s. 1.2.)

§ 131F-18. Requirements of coventurers.

(a) Written Consent. – Prior to the commencement of any charitable sales promotion or sponsor sales promotion in this State conducted by a coventurer on behalf of a charitable organization or sponsor, the coventurer shall obtain the written consent of the charitable organization or sponsor whose name will be used during the charitable sales promotion or sponsor sales promotion.

(b) Rules. – The Department may adopt rules requiring disclosure in advertising for a charitable sales promotion or sponsor sales promotion of information relating to the portion or amount that will benefit the charitable organization or sponsor or the charitable purpose or sponsor purpose.

(c) Final Accounting. – A final accounting for each charitable sales promotion or sponsor sales promotion shall be prepared by the coventurer following completion. The final accounting shall be provided to the charitable organization or sponsor on whose behalf the sales promotion was conducted within 10 days after a request by the charitable organization or sponsor. The final accounting shall be kept by the coventurer for a period of three years, unless the coventurer and the charitable organization or sponsor mutually agree that the accounting should be kept by the charitable organization or sponsor instead of the coventurer. A copy of the final accounting shall be provided to the Department no later than 10 days after the Department requests it. (1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 759, s. 2.)

§ 131F-19. Reserved for future codification purposes.